

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STRASB 00075 242258Z

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SUBJECT: COUNCIL OF EUROPE - GARRET FITZGERALD ON EUROPE'S
PLACE IN THE WORLD

1. SUMMARY: GARRET FITZGERALD, IRISH FOREIGN MINISTER AND CURRENTLY PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY, ADDRESSED THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY ON APRIL 23. IN A SPEECH WITH A NOTICEABLE UPBEAT, FITZGERALD CALLED ON EUROPEANS NOT TO UNDERVALUE THEIR ROLE IN THE WORLD. CSCE HAD HELPED WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES TO FIND AN INSTINCTIVE COMMON GROUND. THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE, ALREADY REPRESENTING A WIDE GEOGRAPHICAL AND POLITICAL SPECTRUM, MIGHT PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN CSCE FOLLOW UP. ON EUROPEAN UNIFICATION HE SAID THE ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY, EVEN WITHOUT AWAITING A BROADER CONSENSUS HAS STRENGTHENED THE ROLE AND PRESTIGE OF THE WHOLE OF WESTERN EUROPE IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD. LASTLY, HE

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 STRASB 00075 242258Z

CALLED FOR A STRENGTHENING OF TIES BETWEEN THE EC AND OTHER

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE, BUT UNDERLINED THE NEED TO REVIEW PERIODICALLY THE DIVISION OF WORK BETWEEN THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. IRISH FOREIGN MINISTER GARRET FITZGERALD, WHO IS CURRENTLY PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY, ADDRESSED THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY ON APRIL 23. FITZGERALD IS THE FIRST EC PRESIDENT TO DO SO AND USED THE OCCASION TO DEPICT EUROPE'S PLACE IN THE WORLD IN OPTIMISTIC TERMS.

3. FITZGERALD STRESSED THAT WHILE EUROPE IS NOT HOMOGENEOUS OR MONOCULTURAL, IT NEVERTHELESS HAS GREATER COHERENCE THAN MOST EUROPEANS REALIZE AND CAN PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE WORLD. BECAUSE NO WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRY HAS OR SEEKS A SIGNIFICANT MILITARY ROLE OUTSIDE THE CONTINENT, EUROPE IS ATTRACTIVE, OR AT LEAST ACCEPTABLE, AS A PARTNER TO COUNTRIES IN THE THIRD WORLD. IN SHORT, FITZGERALD SAID EUROPE MUST NOT UNDERVALUE ITS ROLE IN THE WORLD.

4. ON CSCE, FITZGERALD DEFENDED WESTERN EFFORTS TO OBTAIN AS MUCH PROGRESS AS POSSIBLE ON THIRD BASKET ITEMS IN EXCHANGE FOR CONCESSIONS WHICH THE EAST SEEKS UNDER OTHER HEADINGS. HE SAW VALUE IN THE CSCE DISCUSSIONS, NOT JUST BECAUSE EAST AND WEST WERE DISCUSSING COMMON PROBLEMS, BUT ALSO BECAUSE WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES - EC AND NOW EC ALIKE - HAVE FOUND "INSTINCTIVE" COMMON GROUND IN SPITE OF THEIR MEMBERSHIP IN A VARIETY OF DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS. AS TO CSCE FOLLOW-UP, FITZGERALD HOPED THAT "IT MAY BE POSSIBLE FOR OUR COUNTRIES TO CONTEMPLATE WORKING TOGETHER IN THE FUTURE TO REVIEW PROGRESS AFTER A SUITABLE INTERVAL". HE ADDED THAT, IN THIS REGARD, THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE, ALREADY REPRESENTING A WIDE GEOGRAPHICAL AND POLITICAL SPECTRUM, MAY WELL HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY.

5. TURNING TO EUROPEAN UNIFICATION, FITZGERALD NOTED THE DIVERSITY AMONG WESTERN EUROPEAN STATES AND SAID IT SHOULD NOT BE EXPECTED THAT, OUTSIDE CERTAIN SPECIAL FIELDS LIKE CSCE, THERE WILL BE COMMON FOREIGN POLICY ATTITUDES: "WE SHOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO FORCE THE PACE, BUT SHOULD BE WILLING

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 STRASB 00075 242258Z

TO RECOGNIZE THAT WHAT WE ARE DOING IN OUR TIME IS ONLY A SMALL PART OF A HISTORICAL PROCESS". CITING THE COMPLEXITY OF THE EUROPEAN JIGSAW HE SAID MANY COUNTRIES, NOTABLY EC MEMBERS, SEE THE OLD STRUCTURE OF INDEPENDENT SOVEREIGN STATES AND SHIFTING ALLIANCES AS INADEQUATE FOR THE MODERN WORLD. EC STATES ARE SEEKING A NEW POLITICAL "REFLECTION" OF MODERN SOCIETY WHERE DECISIONS MUST SATISFY "THE THIRST OF PEOPLE FOR A MAXIMUM OF CONTROL OVER DECISIONS AFFECTING THEIR

LIVES DIRECTLY", AND THE NEED TO DECIDE MANY MATTERS "ON A SUBCONTINENTAL, OR EVEN A WORLD, SCALE". FITZGERALD STRONGLY BELIEVES THE COMMUNITY, EVEN WITHOUT WAITING FOR A BROADER CONSENSUS, HAS STRENGTHENED THE ROLE AND PRESTIGE OF THE WHOLE OF WESTERN EUROPE IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

6. FITZGERALD CONCLUDED WITH CALLS TO STRENGTHEN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EC AND OTHER COUNCIL OF EUROPE MEMBERS AND TO ENSURE CONTINUING COMPATIBILITY IN THEIR ROLES. HE ENDORSED THE COUNCIL'S RECENT REFORMULATION OF ITS FUNCTIONS (REPORTED STRASBOURG A-22, OF FEBRUARY 27, 1974) BUT CAUTIONED THAT THE DIVISION OF WORK BETWEEN THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS MUST BE REVIEWED PERIODICALLY.ROMINE

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